

# Bard

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Bard

**TRYING.**

**Means rendering  
all the oil from the whale.  
A brute of a thing to do  
to what had been alive  
as we we do.**

**Suppose  
we never killed anything  
would we never die?  
The surmise lives in the air  
around us, the moths and small things  
beneath our feet perishing  
and we beneath some mighty tread,  
the hoof of history.**

**Now Joseph brought  
all his brethren and his kindred  
to him, and gave them places  
in that southern kingdom where  
as years passed they turned into slaves.**

**And the great fish looks to ask the Lord and finds him not.**

**19 January 2014**

## AMPHIBOLITY

or two ways in one gesture  
as to go up and forward  
as an man might climb the stairs  
with no Virgil but his banister  
remorselessly up. Down also  
is an option. A word  
that points to ways, like *cleave*.

“We were together for a while,  
I hid my longings in you  
as if your body were safer than mine.  
Sager. Saner. Saying more.”  
He wasn’t sure, she wasn’t sure.  
The animal of them together  
ran loose in the woods and was gone.

Is gone. Things go. How does it go,  
we say. And then answer, it went.

19 January 2014

= = = = =

The day I was killed  
was a day like this—  
shoveled my way down  
from the barn to the meeting,  
helped a girl hang up her  
fawn-colored faux-fur collar  
coat and that was it.  
They got me before  
I even began to speak,  
I sank into suchness  
and here I am.

20 January 2014

= = = = =

**Born in a call or never mind,  
grew to grasp what wasn't there**

**but always here (pointing  
to his chest) I pointed  
to my head and said  
here here too?  
They are the same he said,  
it's in the finger too.**

**20 January 2014.**

= = = = =

**South Sea and thought  
the fabled wave sisters  
inchoately lagoon.**

**The sea is never far —  
you have to believe me,  
I have no other island —**

**a dark line in the sand  
where my reign ends —**

**every man is an island  
or are there is no sea —**

**for she was in a trance  
when I spoke her  
then she roused and told me  
my future had come and gone  
while she slept and I kept watch.**

**And we're alone now  
with nothing more than the moon  
to worry, and a man's voice  
singing from the other side of the sky.**

**20 January 2014.**

= = = = =

I have turned my back  
on the city  
as Ahab turned his body from the sun

something is waiting for me  
out there in the other,  
in the crowded, scarce-peopled,  
never quite silence of the trees.

Or not trees.  
*The space*  
*between them*  
where the entrance is.

There, the untouched,  
the un-lost come home.

20 January 2014.

= = = = =

**I want to write a divine comedy  
where the Paradiso  
is the exciting part,  
all lights and color  
and bodies at play  
and gods instructing.  
And where the Inferno is  
you just skim, just  
getting the drift  
then looking away.**

**20 January 2014.**



= = = = =

Let be some one said  
or smiling — people  
are just a harbor  
where thoughts sail in

he said, the lanky persimmon-  
eating philosopher, well,  
it takes all kinds,  
the fire service at sunrise  
the vesperal candle wax  
cold on marble and you  
kneeling there  
remembering all the gods  
you've bothered with your prayers —

these are all just speeches  
of unknown characters  
from one great play,  
its Broadway is the Milky Way,  
and you'll never escape

he said, licking the words  
as they slipped through his lips.

21 January 2014.

= = = = =

**When flowers wither  
they change , not lose,  
their beauty. A slip  
of tulip petal  
fallen, pinkish,  
soft and always cool,  
why, touch it,  
tuck it in my  
notebook, see  
what it will say.**

**21 January 2014**

= = = = =

**A choreographer  
should make the place dance,  
the fields move all around, at first  
uneasily, then getting their breath,**

**and give the rocks breath  
so they leap up, move  
and dance and stand to in form,  
standstill in measure,  
in music, —**

**so the photographer  
must make the place move,  
must be a choreographer.**

**21 January 2014.**

= = = = =

**Birdbath in the snow  
faux-marbe, real snow,  
the basin filled with it  
and the birds elsewhere.**

**Learn to survive  
the weather,  
that arrow flying  
from everywhere.**

**21 January 2014.**

= = = = =

**Waiting  
for them to come  
stepping down the hill**

**off Greek vases  
such delicate  
footing, deer, damsels,  
deities.**

**They're of the same  
seeming, the tread of them  
hardly a trace in the snow  
as they incede,  
                  most of them is air,  
form, the color  
                  of no color,  
          of dare, desire,  
and suddenly they're there.**

**21 January 2014.**

**A book from tree bark  
a fish from the cloud —**

**it is the way we mean  
to be together,**

**marriage everywhere.**

**21 January 2014.**

= = = = =

**Vialsof perfume  
wind and snow —  
Florence seen from the air —**

**the novelist wanted  
to be in a man's body  
to feel the world from outside in  
the way men do,  
those hollow creatures,  
ambulant voids.**

**There was too much in her  
to bear. Be another.  
She writes a man out  
on a piece of paper,  
and becomes him.  
Then what is the world to do?**

**21 January 2014**

= = = = =

Quiet as a bell  
who said?

The overtones dying away —  
the better the metal the longer the song.

Bell metal. Mean to me  
the way a thing does,  
intact,  
invariant.

No wonder  
we like things,  
they put us in mind  
of what we should be,

or how it is, it,  
the Verity  
under all the blissful accidents.

22 January 2014.



= = = = =

**Broken cabs are still yellow  
the broken lightbulb still can cut the finger  
function is a strange body in the bed beside you  
a bath in the Dead Sea  
selling rights to square centimeters of your living skin**

**or in fee simple the purchase of half an acre  
gives you all the way down to the center of the earth  
presumably an ever-diminishing pyramid or cone  
until the flagrant middle of Our House**

**or is it ours? Are we  
just the music it plays?  
When King Josiah exiled the priests  
of Wisdom into the desert  
what they did in turn teach the sand the stone  
from which we still can learn,**

**why else is a rock so smart?  
Taught the ground to study the stars  
and conversely, taught the water  
to hide deep away from us  
until the Wise Woman speaks  
or gets some prince of Egypt to do it for her,  
reading the magic spell  
she's hidden in his fluent beard.  
And is she too just mistress of our feeble choir,  
so many voices and just one lone song?**

**22 January 2014**

